Installing LaTeX on your Computer

The first part of this document was created by Dr. Justin James for Spring 2017.

1 Downloading and Installation

In order to typeset documents using LaTeX on your own computer you will need four pieces of software, MikTeX, TeXnicCenter, GhostScript and GhostView.

• The first one you will need to download and install is MikTeX. MikTeX can be found at http://miktex.org/download. Download the latest version and install it on your computer. As you go through the installation process, make sure to change the paper size from A4 to letter. You should also seriously consider allowing MikTeX to install packages on the fly (i.e. switch from "ask me first" to "Yes" on that option during the installation).

• Next, you should download and install GhostScript and GSView, which can be found at the websites http://www.ghostscript.com/download/gsdnld.html
and http://www.gsview.com/downloads.html respectively.

• Finally, download and install TeXnicCenter.
This can be found at http://www.texniccenter.org/download/.

2 Set Up

Once you have downloaded and installed each of the programs above, when you first launch TeXnicCenter, it will give you the opportunity to tell it that you are using the standard MikTeX installation. This is highly recommended, since TeXnicCenter will set up all the file associations for build profiles for you automatically.

Start the program TeXnicCenter. Shortly after starting the program a configuration wizard will appear. Click next to go on to the next page of the wizard. Otherwise the manual process is much more difficult. Come see me if anything goes wrong in the installation process.

Once everything is installed and configured, begin experimenting. The best way to learn and get comfortable with LaTeX are to work with it frequently and to spend time typesetting creative documents. You can also learn a lot by looking at sample files and by visiting online communities such as https://www.tug.org/.

3 Macs

Added by Dr. Fagerstrom:

Note: To install LaTeX on a Mac, I talked to Dr. Cabanela in Physics, as he both uses LaTeX (as do most physicists) and uses a Mac. He suggested that you see https://tug.org/mactex/. If you do a search, "texlive" and "mactex" are good key words. Note: I believe that TeXnicCenter does not have a Mac version, but that is just an easy interface to create files. Using a Mac-specific interface is fine, and your end document should look the same regardless of the interface used.

4 General Information Literacy

Note: the "tug" in tug.org stands for "Tex Users Group". For LaTeX-related questions, I would view a tug.org website as a trusted and well-informed source of answers.